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(54) **SELECTABLE MODE BASED SOCIAL NETWORKING INTERACTION SYSTEMS AND METHODS**

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G06F 15/16 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
USPC **709/204**

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
USPC 709/206
See application file for complete search history.

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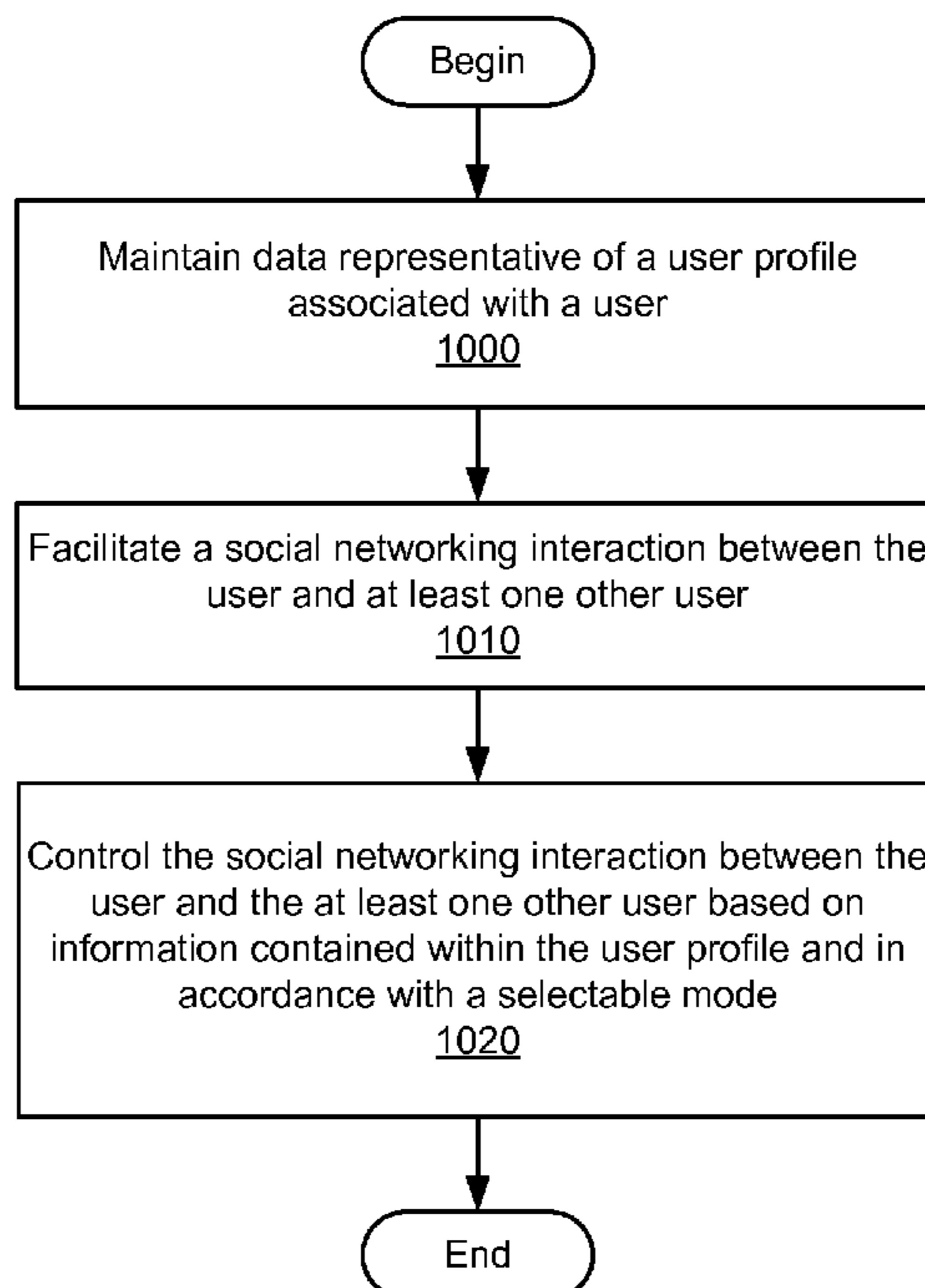
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Primary Examiner — Brian P Whipple

(57) **ABSTRACT**

In an exemplary method, data representative of a user profile associated with a user is maintained, a social networking interaction between the user and at least one other user is facilitated, and the social networking interaction between the user and the at least one other user is controlled based on information contained within the user profile and in accordance with a selectable mode.

20 Claims, 10 Drawing Sheets



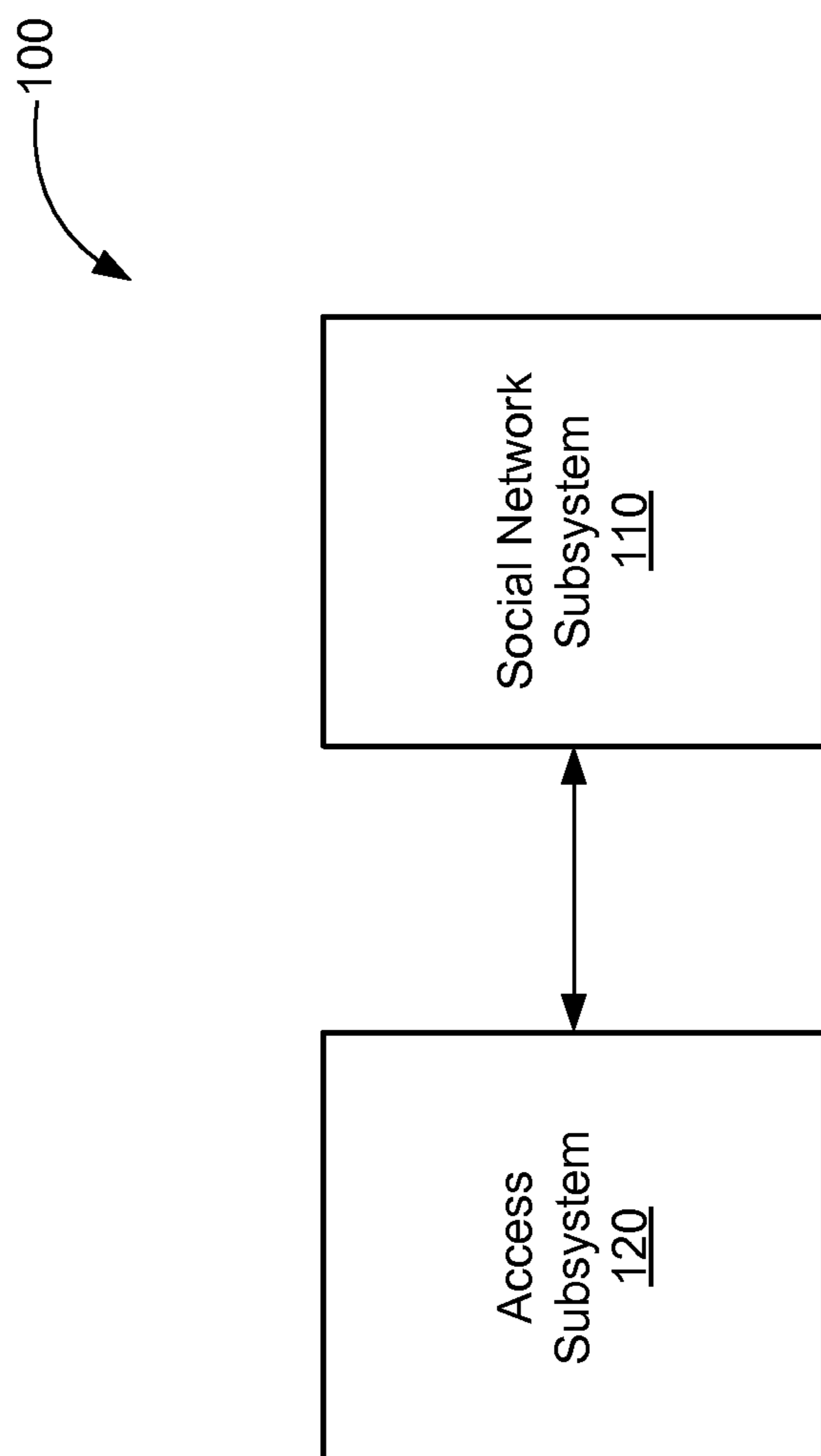


Fig. 1

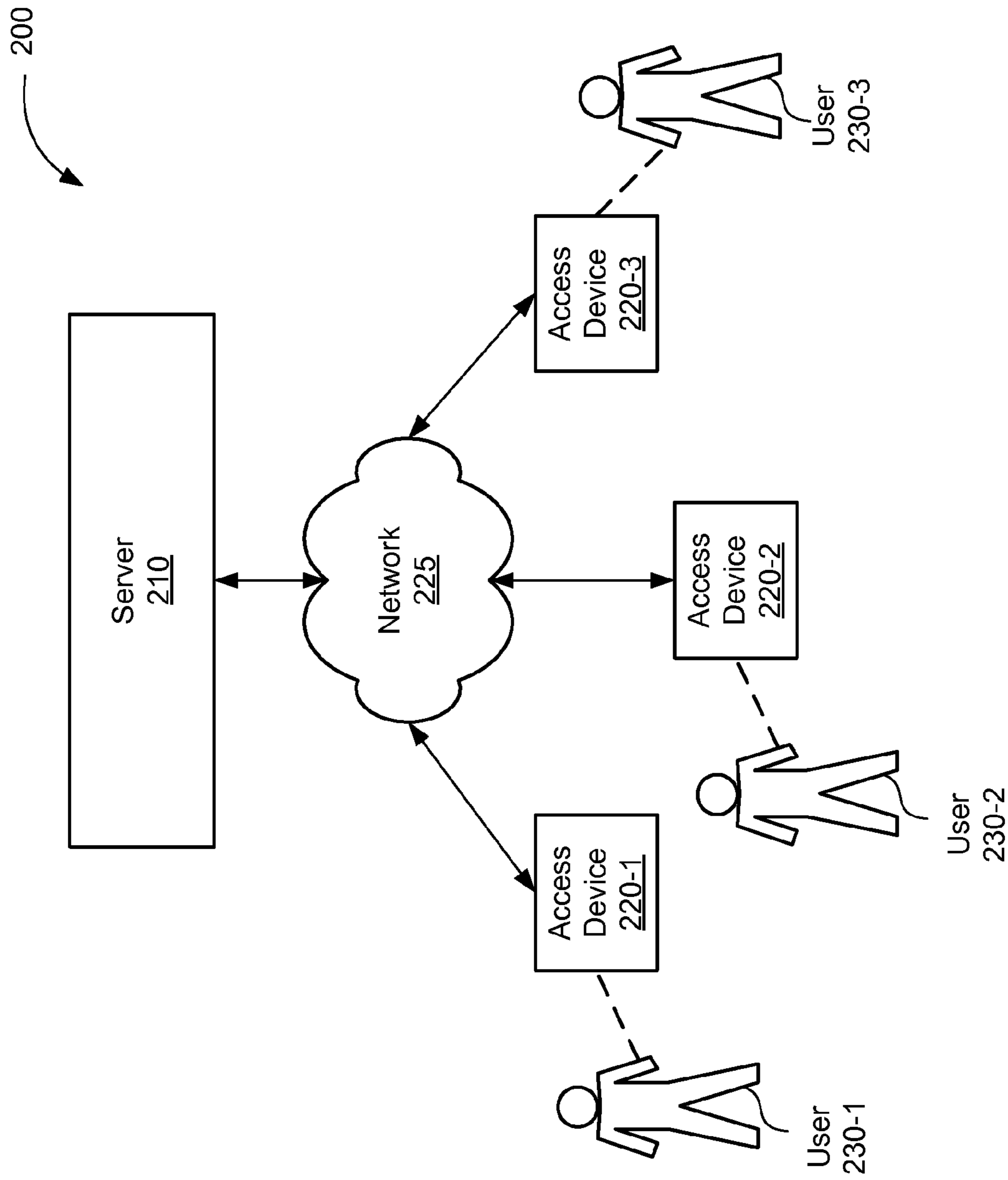


Fig. 2

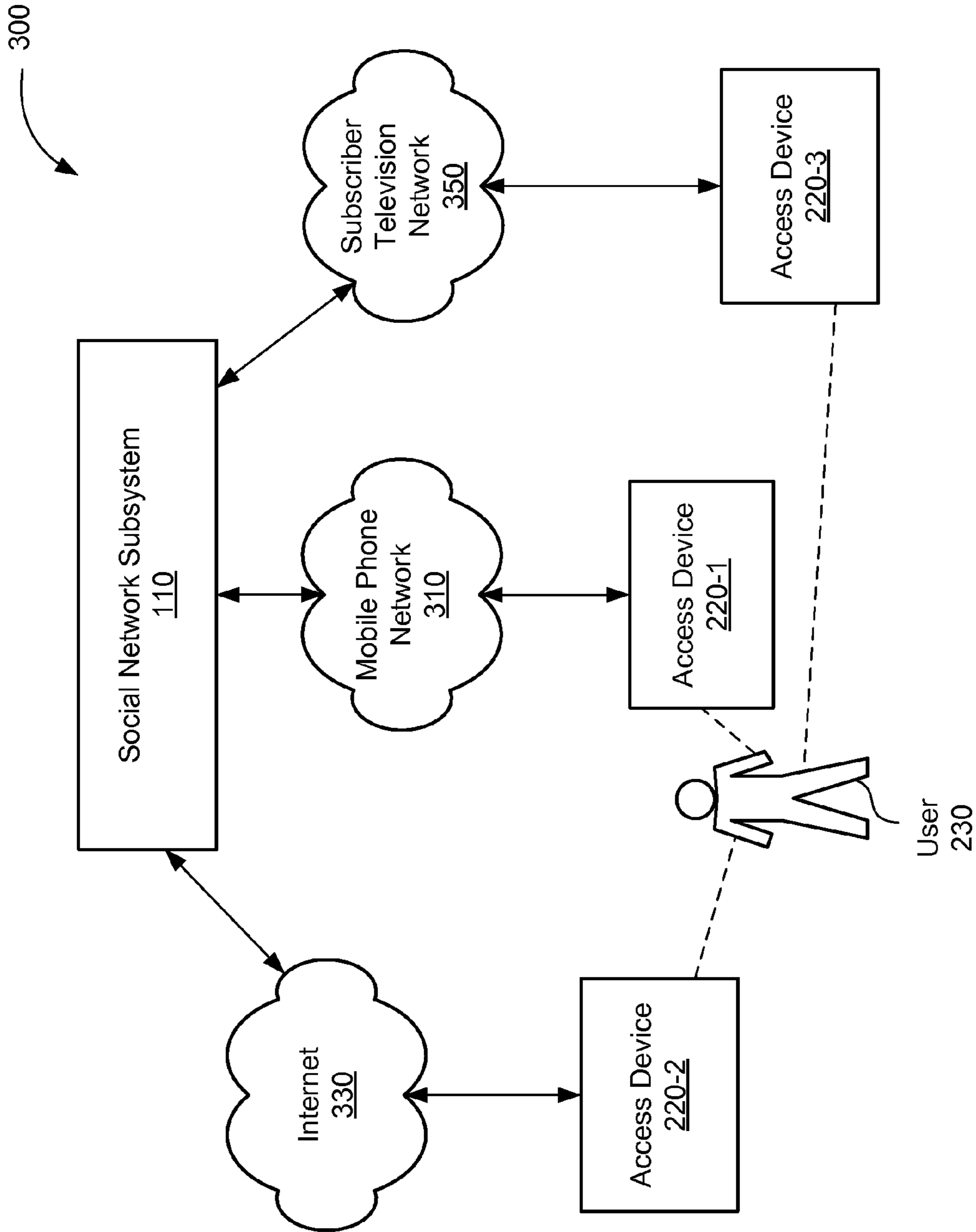


Fig. 3

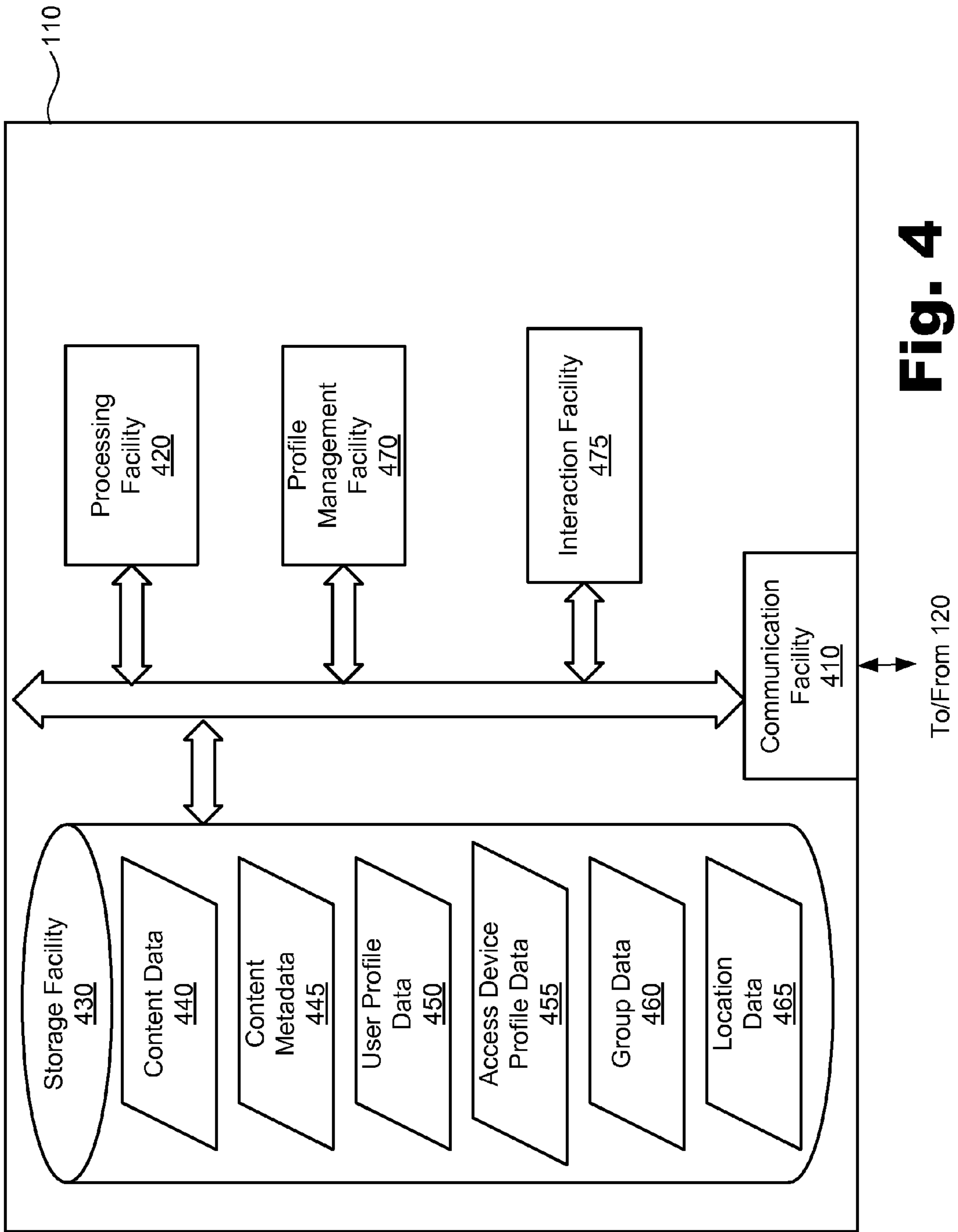


Fig. 4

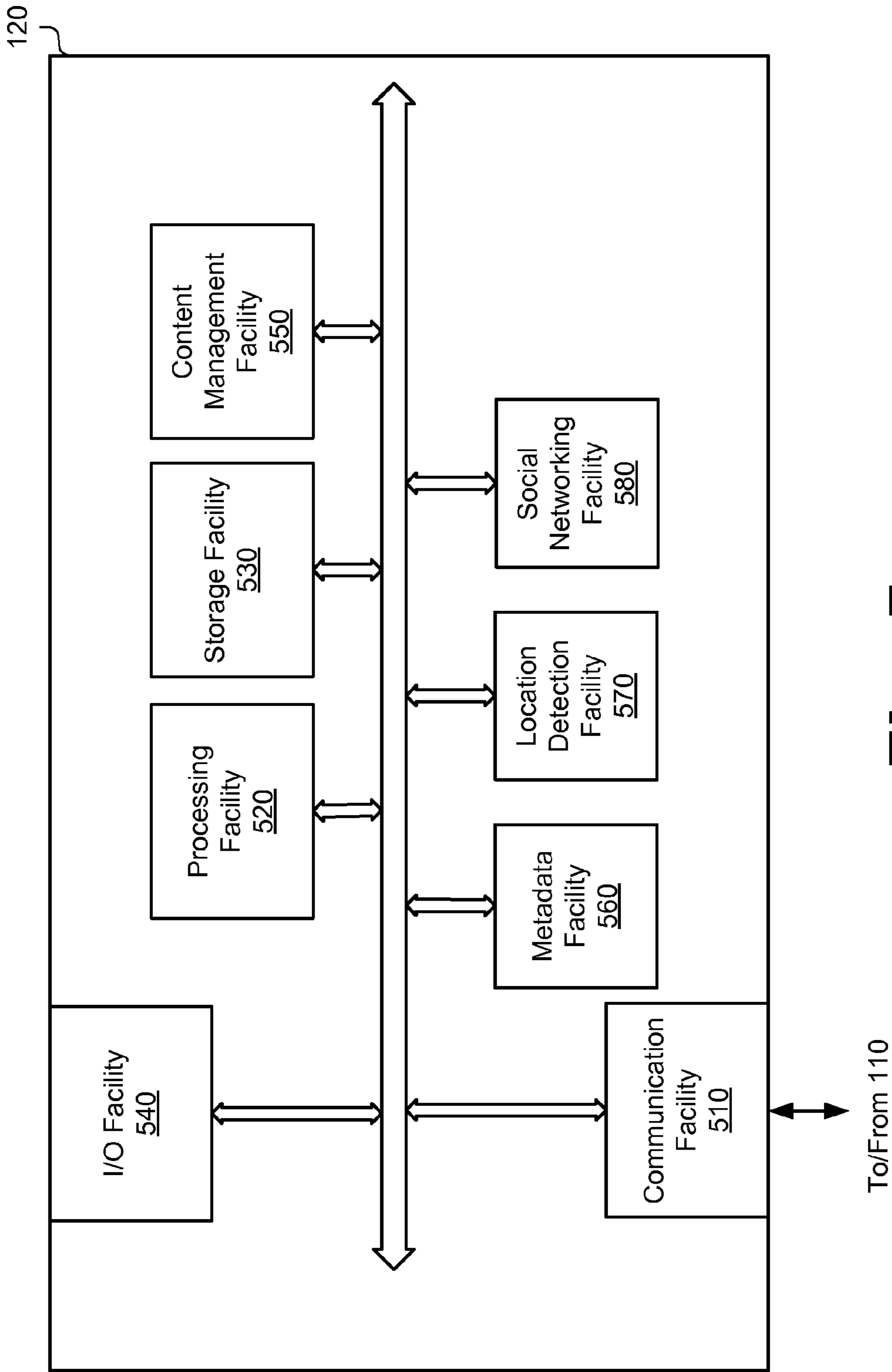


Fig. 5

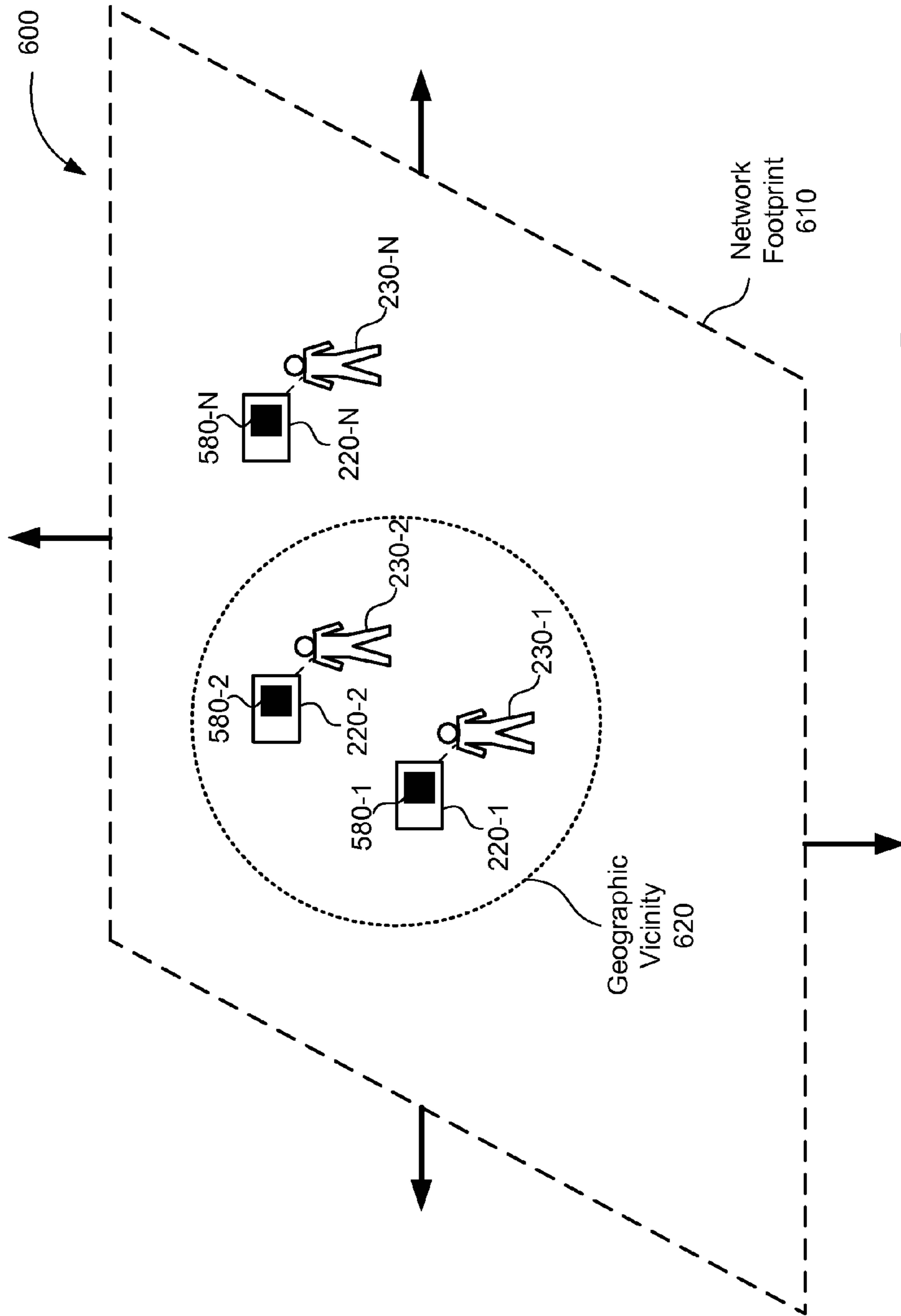


Fig. 6

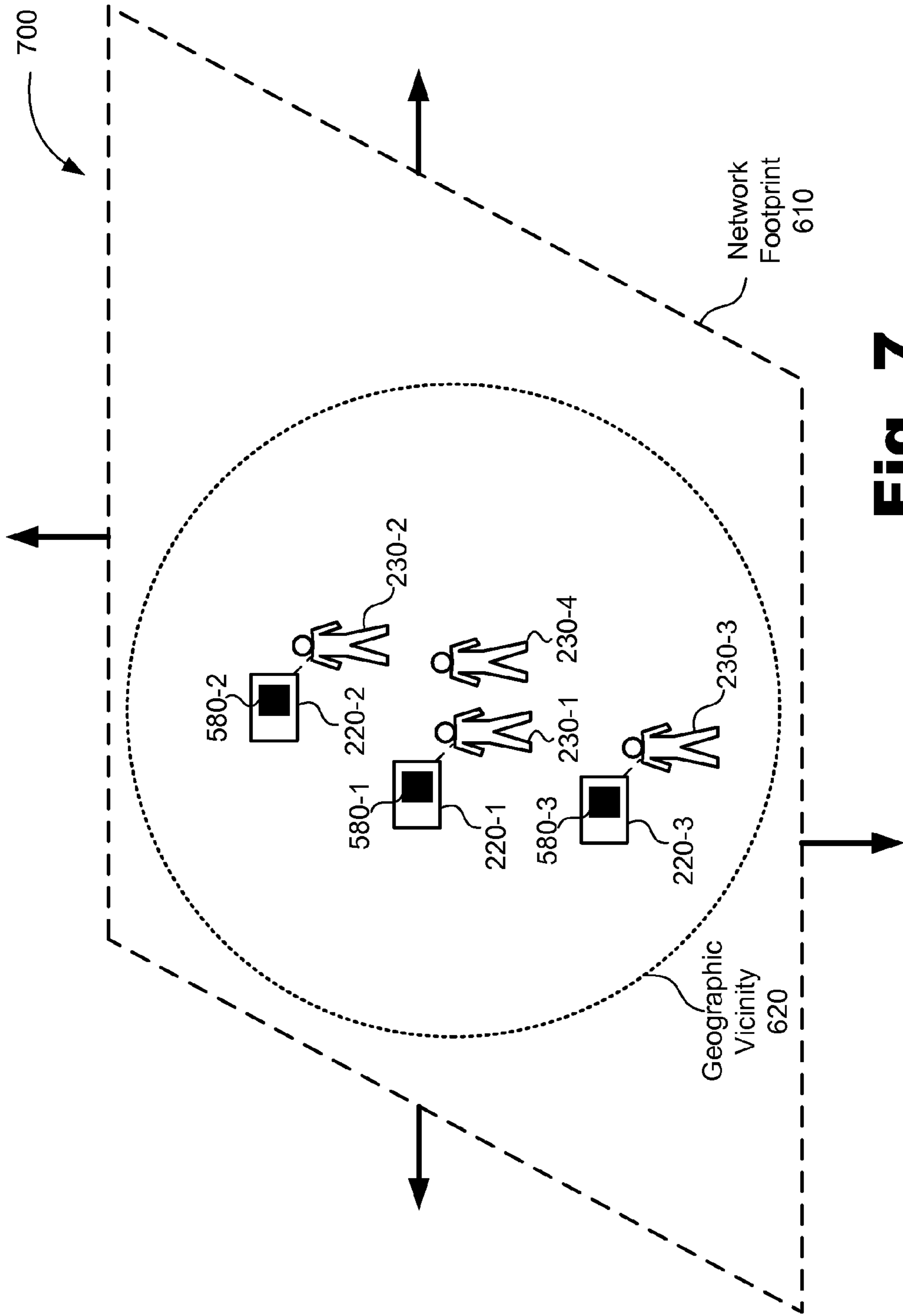


Fig. 7

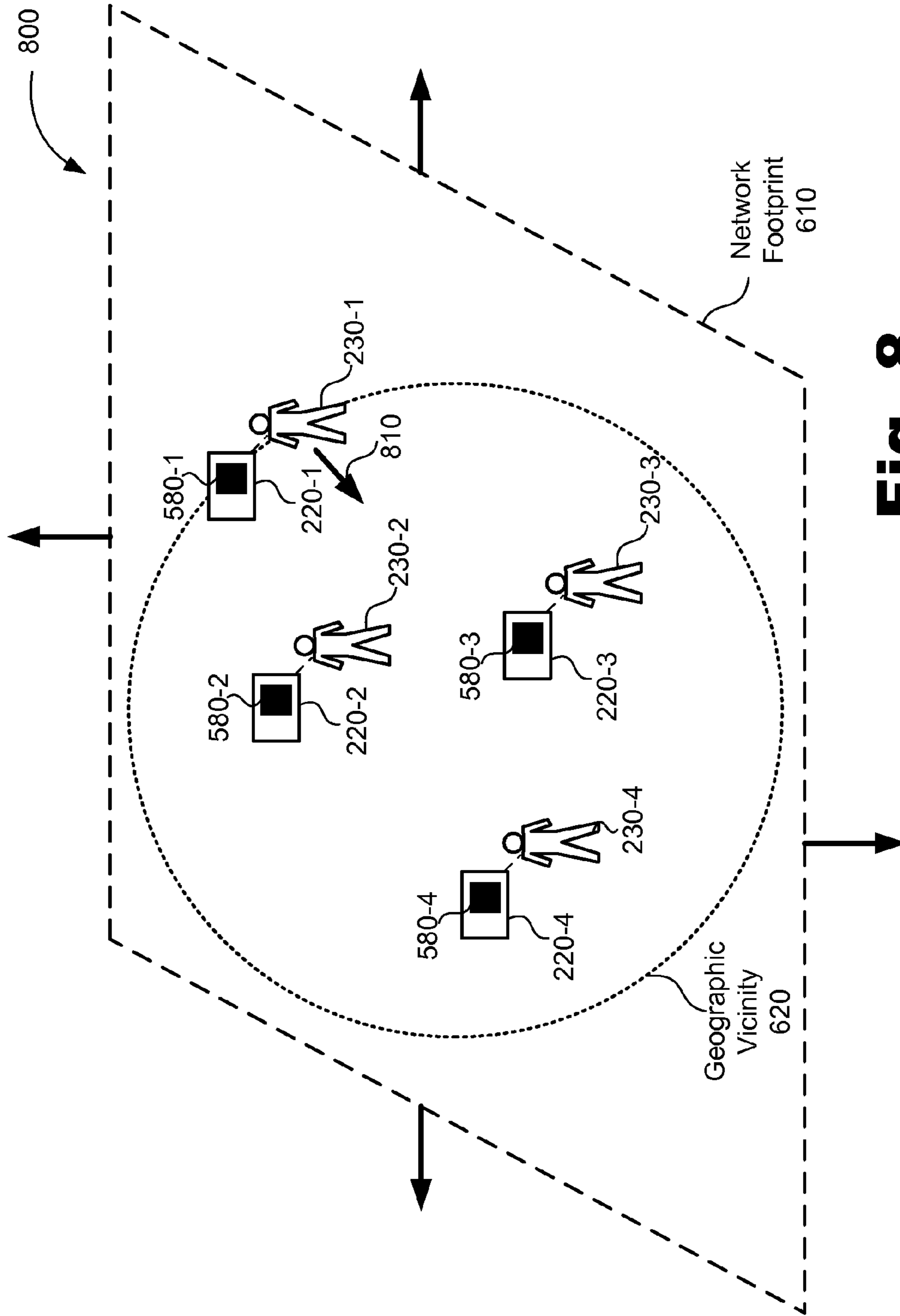


Fig. 8

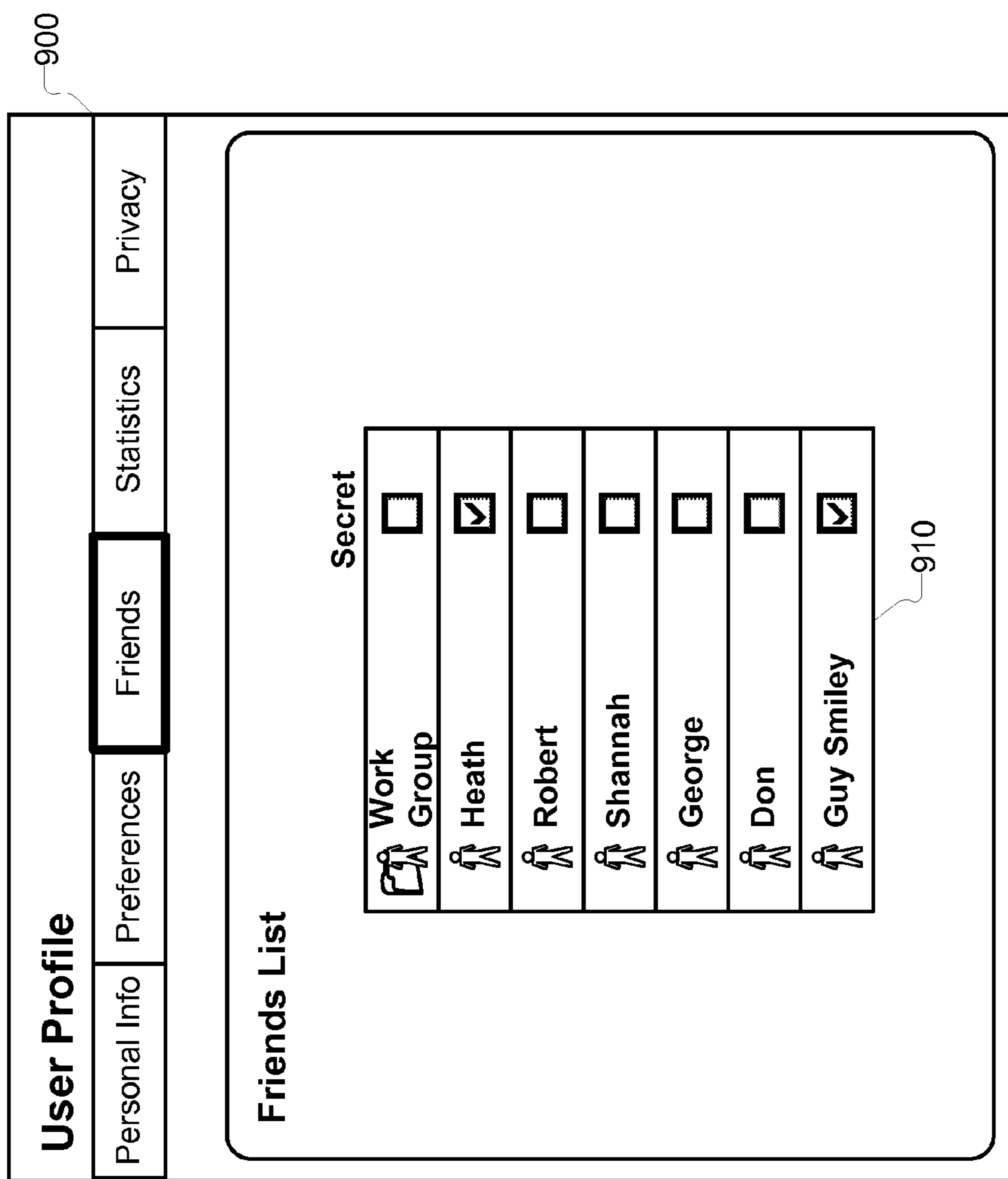
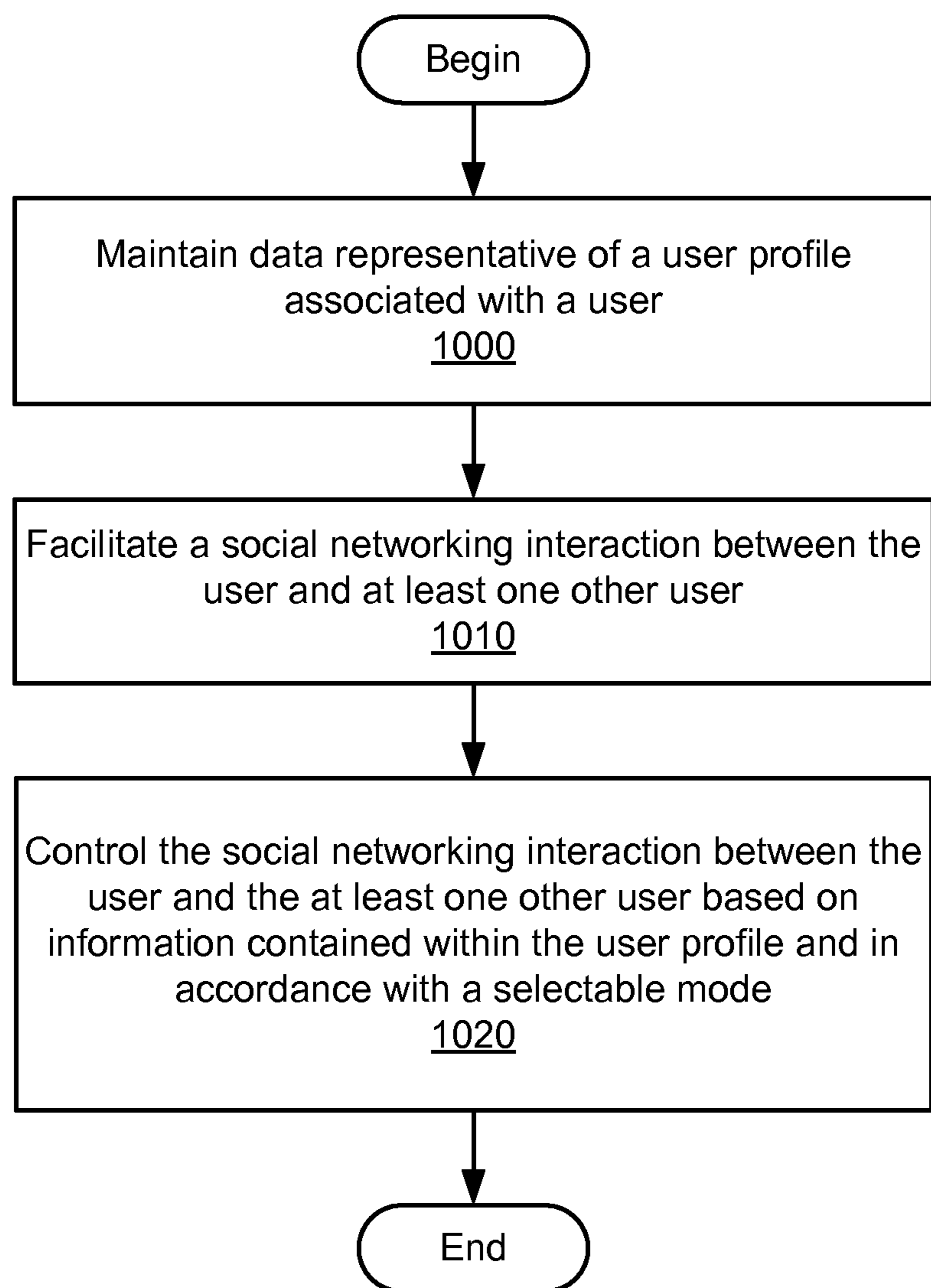


Fig. 9

**Fig. 10**

1

SELECTABLE MODE BASED SOCIAL NETWORKING INTERACTION SYSTEMS AND METHODS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Advances in electronic communications technologies have interconnected people and allowed for distribution of information perhaps better than ever before. To illustrate, social networking applications, which allow people to virtually connect with one another, have become enormously popular.

One downfall associated with current social networking applications is that the users thereof must be engaged with their computers in order to participate. This inhibits the ability of users to utilize social networking applications in many real-world settings where they may not have direct access to their computers.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying drawings illustrate various embodiments and are a part of the specification. The illustrated embodiments are merely examples and do not limit the scope of the disclosure. Throughout the drawings, identical or similar reference numbers designate identical or similar elements.

FIG. 1 illustrates an exemplary social networking system according to principles described herein.

FIG. 2 shows an exemplary implementation of the system of FIG. 1 according to principles described herein.

FIG. 3 shows another exemplary implementation of the system of FIG. 1 according to principles described herein.

FIG. 4 illustrates components of an exemplary social network subsystem according to principles described herein.

FIG. 5 illustrates components of an exemplary access subsystem according to principles described herein.

FIG. 6 shows a configuration wherein a plurality of access devices are physically located at different geographic locations within an exemplary network footprint according to principles described herein.

FIG. 7 shows a configuration wherein social networking facilities associated with a plurality of access devices are configured to operate in an entourage mode according to principles described herein.

FIG. 8 illustrates a configuration wherein a social networking facility associated with a user is configured to operate in an arrival mode according to principles described herein.

FIG. 9 illustrates an exemplary graphical user interface that may be provided by access subsystem to facilitate designation of one or more users as secret friends according to principles described herein.

FIG. 10 illustrates an exemplary social networking interaction method according to principles described herein.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Selectable mode based social networking interaction systems and methods are described herein.

An exemplary method includes maintaining data representative of a user profile associated with a user, facilitating a social networking interaction between the user and at least one other user, and controlling the social networking interaction between the user and the at least one other user based on information contained within the user profile and in accordance with a selectable mode. As used herein, a “mode” refers to a particular manner in which a social networking facility is configured to operate. Exemplary modes include, but are not

2

limited to, “mingle mode”, “entourage mode”, “arrival mode”, and “secret friends” mode. Each of these modes will be described in more detail below.

Another exemplary method includes facilitating a social networking interaction between a user and at least one other user, detecting a geographic location of at least one of the user and the at least one other user, and controlling the social networking interaction between the user and the at least one other user in response to the detected geographic location and in accordance with a selectable mode.

An exemplary system includes a storage facility configured to maintain data representative of a user profile associated with a user and a social networking facility configured to direct a processing facility to facilitate a social networking interaction between the user and at least one other user. The social networking facility is further configured to control the social networking interaction between the user and the at least one other user based on information contained within the user profile and in accordance with a selectable mode.

Another exemplary system includes a social networking facility configured to direct a processing facility to facilitate a social networking interaction between a user and at least one other user and a location detection facility configured to detect a geographic location of at least one of the user and the at least one other user. The social networking facility is further configured to control the social networking interaction between the user and the at least one other user in response to the detected geographic location and in accordance with a selectable mode.

In some examples, an access subsystem associated with a user may be selectively and communicatively coupled to a social network subsystem over a network. The access subsystem may include a social networking facility configured to facilitate a social networking interaction between the user and at least one other user. The social networking facility may be further configured to control the social networking interaction between the user and the at least one other user based on information contained within a user profile corresponding to the user and in accordance with a selectable mode.

Exemplary embodiments of selectable mode based social networking interaction systems and methods will now be described in more detail with reference to the accompanying drawings.

FIG. 1 illustrates an exemplary social networking system **100** (or simply “system **100**”). As shown in FIG. 1, system **100** may include a social network subsystem **110** and an access subsystem **120** configured to communicate with one another.

Access subsystem **120** and social network subsystem **110** may communicate using any communication platforms and technologies suitable for transporting data representative of content, content metadata, content management commands, and/or other communications, including known communication technologies, devices, media, and protocols supportive of remote or local data communications. Example of such communication technologies, devices, media, and protocols include, but are not limited to, data transmission media, communications devices, Transmission Control Protocol (“TCP”), Internet Protocol (“IP”), File Transfer Protocol (“FTP”), Telnet, Hypertext Transfer Protocol (“HTTP”), Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure (“HTTPS”), Session Initiation Protocol (“SIP”), Simple Object Access Protocol (“SOAP”), Extensible Mark-up Language (“XML”) and variations thereof, Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (“SMTP”), Real-Time Transport Protocol (“RTP”), User Datagram Protocol (“UDP”), Global System for Mobile Communications (“GSM”) technologies, Code Division Multiple Access

(“CDMA”) technologies, Time Division Multiple Access (“TDMA”) technologies, Short Message Service (“SMS”), Multimedia Message Service (“MMS”), Evolution Data Optimized Protocol (“EVDO”), radio frequency (“RF”) signaling technologies, signaling system seven (“SS7”) technologies, Ethernet, in-band and out-of-band signaling technologies, and other suitable communications networks and technologies.

In some examples, system **100** may include any computer hardware and/or instructions (e.g., software programs), or combinations of software and hardware, configured to perform the processes described herein. In particular, it should be understood that components of system **100** may be implemented on one physical computing device or may be implemented on more than one physical computing device. Accordingly, system **100** may include any one of a number of computing devices, and may employ any of a number of computer operating systems.

Accordingly, the processes described herein may be implemented at least in part as computer-executable instructions, i.e., instructions executable by one or more computing devices, tangibly embodied in a computer-readable medium. In general, a processor (e.g., a microprocessor) receives instructions, e.g., from a memory, a computer-readable medium, etc., and executes those instructions, thereby performing one or more processes, including one or more of the processes described herein. Such instructions may be stored and transmitted using a variety of known computer-readable media.

A computer-readable medium (also referred to as a processor-readable medium) includes any medium that participates in providing data (e.g., instructions) that may be read by a computer (e.g., by a processor of a computer). Such a medium may take many forms, including, but not limited to, non-volatile media, volatile media, and transmission media. Non-volatile media may include, for example, optical or magnetic disks and other persistent memory. Volatile media may include, for example, dynamic random access memory (“DRAM”), which typically constitutes a main memory. Transmission media may include, for example, coaxial cables, copper wire and fiber optics, including the wires that comprise a system bus coupled to a processor of a computer. Transmission media may include or convey acoustic waves, light waves, and electromagnetic emissions, such as those generated during radio frequency (“RF”) and infrared (“IR”) data communications. Common forms of computer-readable media include, for example, a floppy disk, a flexible disk, hard disk, magnetic tape, any other magnetic medium, a CD-ROM, DVD, any other optical medium, punch cards, paper tape, any other physical medium with patterns of holes, a RAM, a PROM, an EPROM, a FLASH-EEPROM, any other memory chip or cartridge, or any other medium from which a computer can read.

FIG. 2 shows an exemplary implementation **200** of system **100**. In implementation **200**, social network subsystem **110** may include or be implemented within at least one server **210**, and access subsystem **120** may include or be implemented within at least one access device (e.g., access devices **220-1** through **220-3**, collectively referred to herein as “access devices **220**”) configured to communicate with server **210** by way of a network **225**. Network **225** may include one or more networks, including, but not limited to, wireless networks, mobile telephone networks (e.g., cellular telephone networks), closed media networks, subscriber television networks, cable networks, satellite networks, the Internet, intranets, local area networks, public networks, private networks, optical fiber networks, broadband networks, narrowband net-

works, voice communications networks, Voice over Internet Protocol (“VoIP”) networks, Public Switched Telephone Networks (“PSTN”), and any other networks capable of carrying data representative of content, data associated with content (e.g., metadata), data management commands, and/or communications signals between access devices **220** and server **210**. Communications between server **210** and access devices **220** may be transported using any one of above-listed networks, or any combination or sub-combination of the above-listed networks.

Each access device **220** may include any device configured to perform one or more of the processes described herein, including communicating with and/or transmitting and receiving content, data associated with content (e.g., metadata), social networking commands, and/or content operation commands to/from social network subsystem **110** by way of network **225**. Access device **120** may include, but is not limited to, a computing device (e.g., a desktop or laptop computer), a set-top box, a communication device, a wireless computing device, a wireless communication device (e.g., a mobile phone), a Global Positioning System (“GPS”) device, a personal digital assistant, a content recording device (e.g., a camera, audio recorder, video camera), a vehicular computing and/or communication device, a content-enabled device, a gaming device, and/or any other device configured to perform one or more social networking interactions and/or acquire, transmit, receive, access, or otherwise process content.

As shown in FIG. 2, each access device **220** may be associated with at least one user (e.g., users **230-1** through **230-3**, collectively referred to herein as “users **230**”). As will be described in more detail below, each user **230** may virtually connect or otherwise communicate or interact with other users **230** using social networking subsystem **110**. Moreover, each user **230** may provide and/or access content stored within social network subsystem **110** via one or more of the access devices **220**.

In some examples, one or more of the users **230** may be subscribers to or users of one or more services provided over network **225**. For example, one or more of the users **230** may be subscribers to a particular social networking service and/or a wireless telephone service. Other services may be provided over network **225** as may serve a particular application.

Social network subsystem **110** may be configured to support communication with access subsystem **120** via multiple network platforms. For example, user **230** may utilize multiple access devices **220**, each a part of a different network platform, to interact with social network subsystem **110**.

To illustrate, FIG. 3 shows an exemplary implementation **300** of system **100**. As shown in FIG. 3, the implementation **300** may include social network subsystem **110** and access devices **220-1** through **220-3** associated with user **230**. Social network subsystem **110** may be configured to communicate with each access device **220** over a different network platform. For example, social network subsystem **110** may be configured to communicate with access device **220-1** (e.g., a mobile phone) over a mobile phone network **310**, with access device **220-2** (e.g., a personal computer) over the Internet **330**, and/or with access device **220-3** (e.g., a set-top box) over subscriber television network **350**. Hence, user **230** may be able to utilize any of the access devices **220-1** through **220-3** to provide and/or access content stored within and/or access social networking services provided by social network subsystem **110**. It will be recognized that mobile phone network **310**, the Internet **330**, and subscriber television network **350** may be part of network **225** shown in FIG. 2. It will also be recognized that the networks shown in FIG. 3 are merely

illustrative of the many different types of networks that may facilitate communication between social network subsystem **110** and access subsystem **120**.

FIG. **4** illustrates components of an exemplary social network subsystem **110**. The components of social network subsystem **110** may include or be implemented as hardware, computing instructions (e.g., software) embodied on a computer-readable medium, or a combination thereof. In certain embodiments, for example, one or more components of social network subsystem **110** may include or be implemented on one or more servers, such as server **210**, configured to communicate over network **225**. While an exemplary social network subsystem **110** is shown in FIG. **4**, the exemplary components illustrated in FIG. **4** are not intended to be limiting. Indeed, additional or alternative components and/or implementations may be used.

As shown in FIG. **4**, social network subsystem **110** may include a communication facility **410**, which may be configured to communicate with access subsystem **120**, including receiving data representative of content, data representative of social networking commands, and content data operations from access subsystem **120** and/or any other device or subsystem. Communication facility **410** may additionally or alternatively be configured to transmit content, social networking commands, and/or any other data to access subsystem **120** and/or any other device or subsystem by way of network **225**. The communication facility **410** may include and/or support any suitable communication platforms and technologies for communicating with and transporting content and associated data to/from access subsystem **120**. Communication facility **410** may be configured to support a variety of communication platforms, protocols, and formats such that social network subsystem **110** can receive data from and distribute data to a variety of computing platforms (e.g., a mobile telephone service platform, a web-based platform, a subscriber television platform, etc.) using a variety of communications technologies. Accordingly, the social network subsystem **110** may be configured to support a multi-platform system in which data can be received from and provided to diverse platforms.

Social network subsystem **110** may include a processing facility **420** configured to control operations of components of the social network subsystem **110**. Processing facility **420** may execute or direct execution of operations in accordance with computer-executable instructions stored to a computer-readable medium such as a storage facility **430**. As an example, processing facility **420** may be configured to process data and/or communications received from or to be transmitted to access subsystem **120**.

In some examples, processing facility **420** may be configured to perform device-specific content formatting before content is provided to (e.g., downloaded by) a particular access device **220**. In this manner, the content may be optimally viewed or otherwise experienced by a user of the access device **220**.

Storage facility **430** may include one or more data storage media, devices, or configurations and may employ any type, form, and combination of storage media. For example, the storage facility **430** may include, but is not limited to, a hard drive, network drive, flash drive, magnetic disc, optical disc, random access memory (“RAM”), dynamic RAM (“DRAM”), other non-volatile and/or volatile storage unit, or a combination or sub-combination thereof. Storage facility **430** may store any suitable type or form of electronic data, including content data **440**, content metadata **445**, user profile data **450**, access device profile data **455**, group data **460**, and/or location data **465**.

Content data **440** may include or be stored within one or more content instances. As used herein, the term “content instance” refers generally to any data record or object (e.g., an electronic file) storing or otherwise associated with content, which may include electronic data representative of text, one or more messages (e.g., short message service (“SMS”) messages, electronic mail messages, or multimedia message service (“MMS”) messages), one or more symbols, one or more graphics, one or more images (e.g., digital photographs and video frames), email contacts, video, audio, multimedia, video games, or any segment, component, or combination of these or other forms of electronic data that may be viewed or otherwise experienced by a user. Content metadata **445** may include metadata associated with one or more of the content instances.

User profile data **450** may include any information descriptive of one or more users who are associated with social network subsystem **110** and/or otherwise receive services provided over network **225**. User profile data **450** may include user authentication information, user identifiers, information about one or more access devices **120** that correspond with a user **230**, user preferences, and/or any other information related to one or more users. User profile data **450** corresponding to a particular user **230** may additionally or alternatively include contact information corresponding to one or more users **230** virtually connected to or otherwise associated with the user **230**. As will be described in more detail below, social network subsystem **110** and/or access subsystem **120** may be configured to control one or more social networking interactions between users **230** based at least in part on user profile data **450** corresponding to the users **230**.

Access device profile data **455** may include any information descriptive of access subsystem **120** and/or any access device **220** configured to communicate with social network subsystem **110**. For example, access device profile data **455** may include data representative of one or more access device identifiers, network addresses (e.g., internet protocol (“IP”) addresses), network resources, computing resources, subscription information, device permissions, platforms, etc.

Group data **460** may include any information that can be used to identify groupings of users **230** and/or access devices **220**. For example, group data **460** may include information indicating that certain users **230** are members of a group within a particular social network. Accordingly, group data **460** may be useful for facilitating selective access of content data **440** by users **230** within a group and/or selective communications between users **230** within a group. In certain embodiments, group data **460** may include information that can be used to access user profile data **450** corresponding to users in a group, and the user profile data **450** may include information that can be used to identify user associations with access devices **120**.

Group data **460** may be defined in any suitable manner, including users (e.g., a member of a particular social network) defining groups and providing data representative of the defined groups to social network subsystem **110**. For example, a user may specify one or more social networking connections and provide the social networking connections to social network subsystem **110** in the form of group data **460**. In certain embodiments, at least certain groups are defined based on user subscription accounts for services provided over network **225**. For example, a default group may be defined by social network subsystem **110** to include any users associated with a subscription account (e.g., a social networking account).

Location data **465** may include any data representative of a detected geographic location of one or more access devices

220. Exemplary location data **465** may include GPS coordinates, trilateration data, and/or any other data representative of a geographic location. As will be described in more detail below, location data **465** may be used by social network subsystem **110** and/or access subsystem **120** to facilitate and/or control various social interactions between users **230**.

In certain embodiments, data **440-465** may be stored using one or more suitable data entities and/or structures, including one or more relational or hierarchical data tables, for example.

Social network subsystem **110** may include a profile management facility **470**, which may be configured to manage one or more user profiles and/or access device profiles and/or maintain a database of permissions associated therewith. For example, profile management facility **470** may be configured to facilitate updating of a user profile and/or an access device profile by a user. In some examples, one or more user profiles and/or access device profiles may be managed within the access subsystem **120**.

Social network subsystem **110** may further include an interaction facility **475**, which may be configured to provide one or more functions configured to facilitate social networking interactions between users **230**. Exemplary functions that may be provided by interaction facility **475** may include, but are not limited to, providing interfaces wherein users **230** may virtually interact with each other, making content accessible to different users **230** within a particular social network or group, providing content recommendations to one or more users **230**, maintaining one or more databases of user permissions and/or privileges, and/or any other function associated with social networking.

Interaction facility **475** may include or be implemented as hardware, computing instructions (e.g., software) tangibly embodied on a computer-readable medium, or a combination of hardware and computing instructions configured to perform one or more of the processes described herein. In certain embodiments, interaction facility **475** may be implemented as a software application embodied on a computer-readable medium such as storage facility **430** and configured to direct the processing facility **420** to execute one or more of the processes described herein.

FIG. 5 illustrates components of an exemplary access subsystem **120**. As shown in FIG. 5, access subsystem **120** may include a communication facility **510**, processing facility **520**, storage facility **530**, input/output (“I/O”) facility **540**, content management facility **550**, metadata facility **560**, location detection facility **570**, and social networking facility **580** communicatively connected to one another. The facilities **510-580** may be communicatively connected using any suitable technologies. Each of the facilities **510-580** may be implemented as hardware, computing instructions (e.g., software) tangibly embodied on a computer-readable medium, or a combination of hardware and computing instructions configured to perform one or more of the processes described herein. In certain embodiments, for example, social networking facility **580** and/or one or more other facilities may be implemented as one or more software applications embodied on a computer-readable medium such as storage facility **530** and configured to direct processing facility **520** of the access subsystem **120** and/or processing facility **420** of the social network subsystem **110** to execute one or more of the processes described herein.

Communication facility **510** may be configured to communicate with social network subsystem **110** (e.g., over network **225**), including sending and receiving data representative of content, data associated with content, content management commands, social networking commands, and/or other com-

munications to/from social network subsystem **110**. Communication facility **510** may include any device, logic, and/or other technologies suitable for transmitting and receiving such data. In certain embodiments, communication facility **510** may be configured to support other network service communications over network **225**, including wireless voice, data, and messaging service communications, for example. Communication facility **510** may be configured to interface with any suitable communication media, protocols, formats, platforms, and networks, including any of those mentioned herein.

Processing facility **520** may be configured to execute and/or direct execution of operations of one or more components of the access subsystem **120**. Processing facility **520** may direct execution of operations in accordance with computer-executable instructions such as may be stored in storage facility **530** or another computer-readable medium.

Storage facility **530** may include one or more data storage media, devices, or configurations and may employ any type, form, and combination of storage media. For example, the storage facility **530** may include, but is not limited to, a hard drive, network drive, flash drive, magnetic disc, optical disc, random access memory (“RAM”), dynamic RAM (“DRAM”), other non-volatile and/or volatile storage unit, or a combination or sub-combination thereof. Data may be temporarily and/or permanently stored in the storage facility **530**.

Different types of data may be maintained within storage facility **530** as may serve a particular application. For example, content data **440**, user profile data **450**, access device profile data **455**, and/or group data **460** may be maintained by storage facility **530**. It will be recognized that data stored within storage facility **530** may additionally or alternatively be stored within storage facility **430** and/or within any other storage medium as may serve a particular application.

I/O facility **540** may be configured to receive user input and provide user output and may include any hardware, firmware, software, or combination thereof supportive of input and output capabilities. For example, I/O facility **540** may include one or more devices for capturing or otherwise creating content, including, but not limited to, a still-shot camera, video camera, scanner, microphone, keyboard or keypad, touch screen component, and/or receiver (e.g., an RF or infrared receiver). Accordingly, a user **230** of access subsystem **120** may create or otherwise acquire content (e.g., by taking a picture, creating a word processing document, or downloading a data file). In some examples, the acquired content may be provided to social network subsystem **110** and/or to another access device **220**.

I/O facility **540** may include one or more devices for presenting content for experiencing by the user **230**, including, but not limited to, a graphics engine, a display, one or more display drivers, one or more audio speakers, and one or more audio drivers. Accordingly, I/O facility **540** may present content (e.g., play back and/or display) for experiencing by the user **230**. I/O facility **540** may also be configured to provide other output for the user **230**, such as graphical user interfaces.

Content management facility **550** may be configured to provide one or more tools for management of content. The tools may include or be provided using hardware, computer-readable instructions embodied on a computer-readable medium such as storage facility **530**, or a combination of hardware and computer-readable instructions. In certain embodiments, content management facility **550** may be implemented as a software application embodied on a computer-readable medium such as storage facility **530** and con-

figured to direct the processing facility **520** of the access subsystem **120** to execute one or more of the content management operations described herein.

The tools may be configured to enable user **230** to create, format, modify, delete, annotate (e.g., edit, rate, label, add a note to, comment about, and categorize content), access, retrieve, copy, move, send, request, receive, decrypt, and/or otherwise manage content stored within access subsystem **120** and/or social network subsystem **110**. For example, a user **230** utilizing the content management tools may create and provide a content instance to social network subsystem **110**. Through content management facility **550**, the user **230** may access and manage the content instance. Content management facility **550** may generate and provide content management commands to social network subsystem **110**, which may be configured to receive and process the commands, and to identify and perform appropriate content management operations based on the commands.

In some examples, the one or more tools provided by content management facility **550** may include one or more application clients configured to facilitate access to content stored within or received from social network subsystem **110**. Exemplary application clients may include, but are not limited to, Internet browsers, image viewers, media players, and/or document readers and editors.

Metadata facility **560** may be configured to perform operations associated with content metadata, including generating, updating, and providing content metadata. The term “metadata” as used herein refers generally to any electronic data descriptive of content and/or content instances. For example, metadata may include, but is not limited to, content instance identifiers (e.g., file names), time data, location data, user data, source data, destination data, size data, creation data, modification data, data structure data, and access data descriptive of content and/or one or more content instances. Examples of metadata may include time data associated with a data operation (e.g., creating, modifying, deleting, receiving, or sending content), location data associated with a data operation (e.g., a geographic or network location at which content is created), user data identifying one or more users associated with content (e.g., a user who created, modified, deleted, sent, received, accessed, or otherwise operated on or is owner of content), content type information (e.g., file type or other predefined category of content), content transport information, source data associated with a source of content (e.g., a user from whom content is received), and destination data associated with a destination to which content is sent (e.g., a user to whom content is transmitted).

Metadata facility **560** may include hardware, computer-readable instructions embodied on a computer-readable medium such as storage facility **530** (e.g., one or more content management software applications), or a combination of hardware and computer-readable instructions. In certain embodiments, metadata facility **560** may be implemented as a software application embodied on a computer-readable medium such as storage facility **530** and configured to direct the processing facility **520** of the access subsystem **120** to execute one or more of metadata operations described herein.

Metadata facility **560** may be configured to detect content management operations and to generate, update, delete, and/or provide metadata associated with the operations. For example, if a content instance is transmitted to a destination, such as by transmitting data representative of the content instance over network **225**, metadata facility **560** may detect the transmission of the content instance and generate and provide metadata indicating a time at which the content instance is sent and the destination to which the content

instance is sent (e.g., a user or remote device identifier). Similarly, if another content instance is received by access subsystem **120** from a source (e.g., social network subsystem **110**), metadata facility **560** may detect the receipt of the other content instance and generate and provide metadata indicating a time at which the other content instance is received and the source that provided the other content instance.

Location detection facility **570** may include any hardware, computing instructions (e.g., software), or combination thereof configured to detect a geographic location of access subsystem **120**. In some embodiments, location detection facility **570** may be configured to utilize GPS technologies to determine the geographic location of the access subsystem **120**, which location may be identified in terms of GPS coordinates. Other suitable location detection technologies may be used in other embodiments, including using principles of trilateration to evaluate radio frequency signals received by access subsystem **120** (e.g., RF signals in a wireless phone network or other wireless network) and to estimate the geographic location of the access subsystem **120**, ad hoc wifi technologies, Bluetooth technologies, radio frequency identification (“RFID”) technologies, and/or any other location detection technologies as may serve a particular application.

Location detection facility **570** may be configured to detect the geographic location of an access subsystem **120** periodically at a predetermined frequency or time, continuously, or in response to a predetermined trigger event. Such a trigger event may include, but is not limited to, receipt of an instruction from social network subsystem **110**. In certain embodiments, location detection facility **570** may be configured to continually detect the geographic location of access subsystem **120** (i.e., location detection facility **570** may be configured to be “always on”). In such embodiments, location detection facility **570** may continually detect the location of the access subsystem **120** at a predefined frequency (e.g., every one or two seconds). In some examples, a user **130** of access subsystem **120** may selectively enable location detection operations such as by launching location detection facility **570**, for example.

Once location detection facility **570** has detected the geographic location of the access subsystem **120**, location detection facility **570** may generate and provide location data **465** (e.g., GPS coordinates) representative of the detected geographic location of the access subsystem **120**. The location data **465** may be provided to storage facilities **430** and/or **530** for storage, to social networking facility **580** for processing, and/or to communication facility **510** for transmission to social network subsystem **110** and/or one or more other access devices **220**.

In some examples, location detection facility **570** may additionally or alternatively detect a geographic location of one or more other access devices **220**, landmarks, or other entities. For example, and as will be described in more detail below, a location detection facility **570** residing within a particular access device **220** may be configured to detect a presence of one or more other access devices **220** within a certain geographic region.

Social networking facility **580** may be configured to facilitate social networking interactions between users **230** in accordance with at least one selectable mode. As mentioned, a “mode” refers to a particular manner in which the social networking facility **580** is configured to operate. Exemplary modes include, but are not limited to, “mingle mode”, “entourage mode”, “arrival mode”, and “secret friends” mode. Each of these modes will be described in more detail below.

In some examples, the particular mode or modes in which the social networking facility **580** operates may be user-se-

lectable. Additionally or alternatively, social networking facility **580** may be configured to automatically switch to or operate in a particular mode in response to a detected location of one or more access devices **220** and/or any other factor as may serve a particular application.

As will be described in more detail below, each mode of operation may be based on information contained within one or more user profiles corresponding to the users **230** and/or geographic locations of one or more access devices **220** associated with the users **230**. Various examples of social networking interactions between users **230** will be described in more detail below.

Social networking facility **580** may include hardware, computer-readable instructions embodied on a computer-readable medium such as storage facility **530** (e.g., one or more software applications), or a combination of hardware and computer-readable instructions. In certain embodiments, social networking facility **580** may be implemented as a software application embodied on a computer-readable medium such as storage facility **530** and configured to direct the processing facility **520** of the access subsystem **120** to execute one or more operations described herein. Exemplary actions that may be performed by social networking facility **580** will be described in more detail below. It will be recognized that one or more functions of social networking facility **580** may be additionally or alternatively performed by interaction facility **475** located within social network subsystem **110**.

Various features, embodiments, and applications of social networking facility **580** will now be described. It will be recognized that the features, embodiments, and applications described herein are merely illustrative, and that social networking facility **580** may be configured to perform additional or alternative functions as may serve a particular application.

As mentioned, social networking facility **580** may be configured to facilitate one or more social networking interactions between users **230** in accordance within one or more selectable modes. Each mode may be configured to direct the social networking facility **580** to function in a distinct manner. In some examples, social networking facility **580** may be configured to operate in two or more modes simultaneously. Exemplary modes of operation will now be described.

In some examples, a social networking facility **580** associated with an access device **220** may be selectively configured to operate in a “mingle mode,” wherein the social networking facility **580** attempts to establish one or more social networking connections with one or more social networking facilities **580** associated with one or more other access devices **220**.

To help facilitate an understanding of a social networking facility **580** operating in mingle mode, FIG. **6** shows a configuration **600** wherein access devices **220-1**, **220-2**, and **220-N** (collectively referred to as “access devices **220**”) are physically located at different geographic locations within an exemplary network footprint **610**. The network footprint **610** refers to a collective geographic space within which access devices **220** are able to receive and transmit network communication signals (e.g., signals to or from a satellite or a broadcast tower). As represented by arrows in FIG. **6**, the reach of the network footprint **610** may extend beyond the illustrated portion of the network footprint **610**. Additionally, while FIG. **6** illustrates a two-dimensional network footprint **610**, it will be understood that the network footprint **610** may be three dimensional in certain implementations.

In some examples, one or more of the access devices **220** shown in FIG. **6** may be mobile devices, such as mobile

phones. Hence, the access devices **220** may be capable of being carried or otherwise transported from location to location.

One or more of the access devices **220** shown in FIG. **6** may include a social networking facility (e.g., social networking facilities **580-1** through **580-N**, collectively referred to herein as social networking facilities **580**). In some examples, a social networking facility **580** operating in mingle mode may be configured to communicate with one or more other social networking facilities **580** in response to a detected geographic location of one or more access devices **220**.

To illustrate, social networking facility **580-1** associated with access device **220-1** may be configured to communicate with other social networking facilities **580** residing on other access devices **220** when access device **220-1** is within the same geographic vicinity **620** as the other access devices **220**. The boundaries of the geographic vicinity **620** may be user-definable and may include any suitable area as may serve a particular application. For example, the geographic vicinity **620** may include a circle having a radius to be a predetermined distance from the access device **220**. Additionally or alternatively, the geographic vicinity **620** may include a particular premises location (e.g., a shopping mall, restaurant, store, meeting place, building, city, etc.). Other boundaries for geographic vicinity **620** may be defined as may serve a particular application.

In the example of FIG. **6**, access devices **220-1** and **220-2** are shown to be located within geographic vicinity **620**. However, access device **220-N** is shown to be located outside of geographic vicinity **620**. Hence, while in mingle mode, social networking facility **580-1** may be configured to communicate with social networking facility **580-2** but not with social networking facility **580-N**.

To this end, access device **220-1** may be configured to detect when another access device (e.g., access device **220-2**) enters into or is otherwise located within geographic vicinity **620**. Such detection may be facilitated by GPS or other location detection technologies. For example, each access device **220** shown in FIG. **6** may be configured to provide location data **465** (e.g., GPS coordinates) representative of their respective geographic locations to social networking subsystem **110** in any of the ways described herein. Social networking subsystem **110** may use the location data to determine which access devices **220** are located within the same geographic vicinity **620** as access device **220-1** and transmit this information to access device **220-1**. Social networking facility **580-1** may then use the transmitted information to initiate communication with access devices **220** located within the same geographic vicinity **620** as access device **220-1**.

Communication between access devices **220-1** and **220-2** located within the same geographic vicinity **620** may be in accordance with any predefined rules as may serve a particular application. These rules may be defined within user profiles corresponding to users **230** of the access devices **220**.

A number of exemplary mingle mode communications between access devices **220** located within the same geographic vicinity **620** and rules that govern these communications will now be described in more detail. It will be recognized that the exemplary communications described herein are merely illustrative, and that the access devices **220** within the same geographic vicinity **620** may be configured to perform additional or alternative communications as may serve a particular application.

In some examples, user **230-1** may configure social networking facility **580-1** to identify one or more other social networking facilities **580** located within geographic vicinity

620 that correspond to users 230 who match certain criteria. For example, user 230-1 may be a single man desiring to meet a woman to date. To this end, user 230-1 may define a number of rules within his user profile specifying one or more criteria that he is looking for in a woman. For example, user 230-1 may specify that he would like to meet a woman with certain physical characteristics, educational background, religious preference, and/or work experience.

With such rules defined, social networking facility 580-1 may be configured to communicate with other social networking facilities 580 corresponding to access devices 220 that are located within the same geographic vicinity 620 as user 230-1 and that are associated with users 230 who satisfy the rules. Because access device 220-1 may be mobile, user 230-1 may take social networking facility 580-1 with him as he moves from location to location. In this manner, social networking facility 580-1 may continually search for other social networking facilities 580 corresponding to women that match the specified criteria as the user 230-1 moves from location to location.

When social networking facility 580-1 detects the presence of another social networking facility (e.g., social networking facility 580-2) within the same geographic vicinity 620, social networking facility 580-1 may be configured to communicate with social networking facility 580-2 to determine whether user 230-2 matches the criteria defined by user 230-1. Such communication(s) may include transmission of any suitable data between access devices 220-1 and 220-2 via network 225. In some examples, social networking facility 580-1 may be configured to make the determination of whether user 230-2 matches the criteria defined by user 230-1 by analyzing information contained within a user profile corresponding to user 230-2. The determination may additionally or alternatively be made using any other suitable procedure or heuristic, such as networking facility 580-1 communicating with social networking subsystem 110 to determine from user profile data 450 whether user 230-2 matches the criteria defined by user 230-1.

If user 230-2 does not match the predefined criteria, social networking facility 580-1 may take no further action. However, if user 230-2 does match the predefined criteria, social networking facility 580-1 may be configured to perform one or more predefined actions. For example, social networking facility 580-1 may be configured to coordinate with social networking facility 580-2 to arrange a meeting between user 230-1 and user 230-2, send an email, text message, or other communication to access device 220-2, create a social networking connection between user 230-1 and user 230-2, alert user 230-1 and/or user 230-2 of the potential match via an audible and/or visible indicator (e.g., a message containing information about user 230-2 and why that user 230-2 is a potential match), and/or store contact information corresponding to user 230-2.

In some examples, social networking facility 580-1 may be configured to create a log of the potential match for access by the user 230-1 at a later time. For example, the user 230-1 may currently be in a relationship and not interested in dating other people. However, social networking facility 580-1 may maintain a log of all potential matches that it detects, and the user 230-1 may access these potential matches when he breaks up and becomes interested in dating other people again.

In some examples, social networking facility 580-1 may be configured to communicate with social networking facility 580-2 to locate potential matches with one or more users 230 that are in some way associated with user 230-2. These users 230 may be linked to user 230-2 via one or more social networking connections, specified within a user profile asso-

ciated with user 230-2, located within an address book or contact list maintained by user 230-2, and/or otherwise associated with user 230-2. To illustrate, social networking facility 580-1 may determine that user 230-2 does not match the criteria defined by user 230-1. However, a friend of user 230-2 may match the criteria defined by user 230-1. In this instance, social networking facility 580-1 may identify the match and notify the user 230-1, send a communication to an access device 220 associated with the potential match, and/or perform any other suitable predefined action.

Another example of how a social networking facility 580 may operate in mingle mode to locate one or more users 230 who match certain criteria is in the context of a business conference. Referring to FIG. 6, user 230-1 may represent a business person attending a business conference. Geographic vicinity 620 may represent the conference center, building, or other geographic area or premises hosting the business conference. In some examples, user 230-1 may desire to meet other attendees of the business conference who meet certain criteria. For example, user 230-1 may desire to network with attendees having certain backgrounds, technical skills, business connections, and/or other attributes. To this end, user 230-1 may define a number of rules specifying the types of people that he would like to meet and how he would like to meet them (e.g., in person, via email, via a phone call, etc.).

With such rules defined, social networking facility 580-1 may be configured to communicate with other social networking facilities 580 corresponding to other users 230 who are also attending the business conference. If social networking facility 580-1 identifies a user (e.g., user 230-2) as matching the predefined criteria, social networking facility 580-1 may be configured to coordinate with social networking facility 580-2 to arrange a meeting between user 230-1 and user 230-2, send an email, text message, or other communication to access device 220-2, create a social networking connection between user 230-1 and user 230-2, alert user 230-1 and/or user 230-2 of the potential match via an audible and/or visible indicator, and/or store contact information corresponding to user 230-2.

In some examples, a social networking facility 580 associated with an access device 220 may be selectively configured to operate in an "entourage mode," wherein the social networking facility 580 is configured to facilitate collaboration among a group of users 230 connected to each other in some manner.

FIG. 7 shows a configuration 700 wherein social networking facilities 580 associated with a plurality of access devices 220 are configured to operate in entourage mode. As shown in FIG. 7, access devices 220-1, 220-2, and 220-3 corresponding to users 230-1, 230-2, and 230-3, respectively, are located within the same geographic vicinity 620. Geographic vicinity 620 may be located within network footprint 610, as described previously.

In some examples, users 230-1, 230-2, and 230-3 are members of a common group. The group may be specified within group data 460 contained within social network subsystem 110 and may be defined by one or more user profiles associated with the users 230 and/or by one or more social networking connections between the users 230. For example, users 230-1, 230-2, and 230-3 may each specify within his or her user profile that he or she is a member of a particular group. A group may be private and require an invitation and/or approval to add users 230 thereto. Alternatively, a group may be public and allow any user 230 to be added thereto. Any method of adding, removing, and/or otherwise managing members of a group may vary as may serve a particular application.

In entourage mode, status information may be maintained by social network subsystem 110 corresponding to each user 230 that is a member of a particular group. The status information may include, but is not limited to, location data 465 corresponding to each user 230, activity status information (e.g., studying, on a date, working, etc.) corresponding to each user 230, and/or any other information associated with each user 230 as may serve a particular application.

In some examples, the status information maintained by social network subsystem 110 may be provided to one or more members of the group. For example, the status information may be transmitted by social network subsystem 110 to one or more of access devices 220 associated with one or more of the users 230 that are members of the group. The status information may be displayed or otherwise processed by the access devices 220 to facilitate access (e.g., viewing) thereof by the users 230.

In some examples, group chat or other communication mediums may be provided to facilitate communications among the members of the group. For example, each access device 220 corresponding to users 230 within a group may include an application configured to facilitate transmission of SMS or MMS messages to each member of the group. In this manner, collaboration between members of the group may be facilitated.

In some examples, each access device 220 corresponding to a user 230 within a group may be preprogrammed with one or more social interaction codes, which may be transmitted as text, graphics, video, audio and/or any combination thereof to other members of the group. The social interaction codes may be predefined by an access device 220 and/or social network subsystem 110. Additionally or alternatively, one or more of the social interaction codes may be defined by one or more users 230 within the group. Exemplary social interaction codes include, but are not limited to, messages (e.g., “need help avoiding this guy”, “need a wingman”, “I’m bored”, “let’s get out of here”, etc.), sounds representative of one or more messages or events, icons representative of one or more messages or events, and/or any other information as may serve a particular application.

An access device 220 may include one or more “hotkeys” or other input mechanisms, that, when selected, direct the access device 220 to transmit a predetermined social interaction code to access devices 220 associated with other users 230 within a group. For example, an access device 220 (e.g., a mobile phone) may include a button preprogrammed to transmit a social interaction code such as “I need help” to other access devices 220 when selected.

The use of such hotkeys may be advantageous in situations wherein a user 230 desires to discretely transmit social interaction codes to other users 230. For example, a user 230 conversing with another person may reach into his or her pocket and select a hotkey disposed on a mobile phone to transmit a social interaction code to other users 230 within his or her group without the other person realizing that the user 230 is communicating with other users 230 within the group.

An example of social networking facilities 280 operating in entourage mode is in the context of a social event, such as a party. Referring to FIG. 7, user 230-1 may represent a person attending a social event. Geographic vicinity 620 may represent the room, building, or other geographic area or premises hosting the social event. In some examples, user 230-1 may be conversing with user 230-4, an attorney determined to expound upon the federal rules of civil procedure. User 230-1 may become bored and desire to leave. To this end, user 230-1 may select a hotkey associated with access device 220-1 to transmit a social interaction code such as “get me out of here”

to access devices 220 (e.g., access devices 220-2 and 220-3) corresponding to other users 230 within the user’s group who are in attendance at the social event. One of these users 230 may then approach users 230-1 and 230-4 and interrupt their conversation in any suitable manner.

In some examples, a social networking facility 580 associated with an access device 220 may be selectively configured to operate in an “arrival mode,” wherein the social networking facility 580 is configured to notify other access devices 220 within a geographic area (e.g., geographic vicinity 620) that a user 230 associated with the access device 220 has arrived to the geographic area.

For example, FIG. 8 illustrates a configuration 800 wherein social networking facility 580-1 associated with user 230-1 is configured to operate in an arrival mode. User 230-1 is shown to be geographically located at a border of geographic vicinity 620. As represented by arrow 810, user 230-1 may be in the process of entering geographic vicinity 620. As user 230-1 enters geographic vicinity 620, social networking facility 580-1 may be configured to automatically notify one or more other users (e.g., users 230-2 through 230-4) located within geographic vicinity 620 that user 230-1 has arrived within geographic vicinity 620. For example, social networking facility 580-1 may be configured to transmit one or more sounds, messages, graphics, or other indicators to access devices 220-2 through 220-4 to notify users 230-2 through 230-4 that user 230-1 has arrived within geographic vicinity 620.

In some examples, the arrival notification may be transmitted only to members of a particular group. For example, users 230-1, 230-2, and 230-3 may be members of a particular group of which user 230-4 is not a part. Hence, the arrival notification may be transmitted to users 230-2 and 230-3, and not to user 230-4.

In some examples, a social networking facility 580 associated with an access device 220 may be selectively configured to operate in a “secret friends mode,” wherein the social networking facility 580 is configured to disguise the identity of one or more users 230 (referred to herein as “secret friends”) virtually connected to a particular user (e.g., user 230-1) such that only the user 230-1 knows the true identities of the secret friends. In this manner, other friends of the user 230-1 and/or other users 230 having access to the user’s access device 220-1 may be prevented from seeing or otherwise discovering that the user 230-1 is associated with the secret friends.

The identity of a user 230 designated as a secret friend may be disguised in any suitable manner. For example, social networking facility 280 may be configured to hide identifying information corresponding to the secret friend within a friends list or contact list associated with the user 230-1. Communications to and from a secret friend may be rendered using a disguised (e.g., fictionalized) name, telephone number, email address, picture, or other identifier known only to user 230-1 to represent the secret friend.

In some examples, user 230-1 may designate another user 230 as a secret friend by modifying a user profile corresponding to the user 230-1. To this end, access subsystem 120 may be configured to provide one or more interfaces (e.g., GUIs) configured to facilitate modification of a user profile corresponding to a particular user (e.g., user 230-1) in order to designate one or more users 230 associated with user 230-1 as secret friends.

FIG. 9 illustrates an exemplary GUI 900 that may be provided by access subsystem 120 to facilitate designation of one or more users 230 as secret friends. As shown in FIG. 9, a list of users 910 may be displayed within GUI 900. In some

examples, the list **910** includes names of individual users (e.g., “Heath”, “Robert”, “Shannah”, “George”, “Don”, and “Guy Smiley”) and/or names of groups of users (e.g., “work group”). Each user and/or group of users may be designated as secret friends by selecting an appropriate checkbox. For example, FIG. **9** shows that users “Heath” and “Guy Smiley” have been designated as secret friends. One or more additional GUIs may be displayed to configure the disguised identifiers for these users **230** as may serve a particular application.

As an example, an exemplary user **230** who may desire to designate one or more other users as **230** as secret friends may be a high school girl. In this case, the student may not want others in her social group to know she has a friend relationship with a boy outside the social group. The girl can designate the boy as a secret friend in her user profile such that the name of the boy is not visible to others viewing the girl’s friends list. Incoming communications from the boy may be altered to appear as though they came from another person.

In some examples, a social networking facility **580** may be configured to operate in one or more modes simultaneously. For example, a social networking facility **580** may be configured to simultaneously operate in both entourage and arrival modes. Any other combination of modes may be used by social networking facility **580** as may serve a particular application.

FIG. **10** illustrates an exemplary social networking interaction method. While FIG. **10** illustrates exemplary steps according to one embodiment, other embodiments may omit, add to, reorder, and/or modify any of the steps shown in FIG. **10**.

In step **1000**, data representative of a user profile associated with a user is maintained. The user profile data may be maintained in any of the ways described herein.

In step **1010**, a social networking interaction between the user and at least one other user is facilitated. The social networking interaction may be facilitated in any of the ways described herein.

In step **1020**, the social networking interaction between the user and the at least one other user is controlled based on information contained within the user profile and in accordance with a selectable mode. The selectable mode may include, but are not limited to, a mingle mode, an entourage mode, an arrival mode, and/or a secret friends mode.

In the preceding description, various exemplary embodiments have been described with reference to the accompanying drawings. It will, however, be evident that various modifications and changes may be made thereto, and additional embodiments may be implemented, without departing from the scope of the invention as set forth in the claims that follow. For example, certain features of one embodiment described herein may be combined with or substituted for features of another embodiment described herein. The description and drawings are accordingly to be regarded in an illustrative rather than a restrictive sense.

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:

maintaining, by at least one computing device, data representative of a user profile associated with a first user of a first mobile device, the user profile defining the first user as a member of an entourage that also includes a second user associated with a second mobile device;

detecting, by the at least one computing device, that the first and second mobile devices are located in a geographic vicinity;

facilitating, by the at least one computing device in response to the detecting that the first and second mobile

devices are located in the geographic vicinity, a transmission of a social interaction code from the first mobile device associated with said first user to the second mobile device associated with said second user; and
 detecting, by the at least one computing device, a selection by the first user of a hotkey included within the first mobile device and associated with the social interaction code, wherein the hotkey comprises a button preprogrammed to transmit the social interaction code in response to user selection of the button.

2. The method of claim **1**, further comprising:

detecting, by the at least one computing device, that the first mobile device and a third mobile device associated with a third user are located in the geographic vicinity; determining, by the at least one computing device in response to the detecting that the first mobile device and the third mobile are located in the geographic vicinity, that the third user matches at least one criterion defined within the user profile associated with the first user; and facilitating, by the at least one computing device in response to the determining, a social networking interaction between the first and third users.

3. The method of claim **1**, wherein said user profile defines the first user as a member of a group that also includes a third user associated with a third mobile device, and wherein the method further comprises:

detecting, by the at least one computing device, that the third mobile device is located in another geographic vicinity;

detecting, by the at least one computing device, an entrance of the first mobile device into the another geographic vicinity; and

transmitting, by the at least one computing device in response to the detecting of the entrance of the first mobile device into the another geographic vicinity, an arrival notification to the third mobile device, the arrival notification configured to notify the third user of an entrance of the first user into the another geographic vicinity.

4. The method of claim **1**, wherein said user profile designates a third user associated with a third mobile device as a secret friend of the first user, and wherein the method further comprises disguising, by the at least one computing device, an identity of the third user on a display of the first mobile device.

5. The method of claim **1**, wherein the social interaction code comprises at least one of text content, graphics content, video content, and audio content.

6. The method of claim **1**, further comprising:

detecting, by the at least one computing device, that the first mobile device and a third mobile device associated with a third user are located in the geographic vicinity; determining, by the at least one computing device in response to the detecting that the first mobile device and the third mobile are located in the geographic vicinity, that the third user matches at least one criterion defined within the user profile associated with the first user; and facilitating, by the at least one computing device in response to the determining, a social networking interaction between the first and third users.

7. The method of claim **6**, wherein the facilitating of the social networking interaction between the first and third users comprises at least one of coordinating a meeting between the first user and the third user, attempting to establish one or more social networking connections between the first user and the third user, alerting the first user that the third user

19

matches the at least one criterion, and automatically storing contact information corresponding to the third user for later access by the first user.

8. A method comprising
 maintaining, by at least one computing device, data representative of a user profile associated with a first user of a first mobile device;
 detecting, by the at least one computing device, that the first mobile device and a second mobile device associated with a second user who is not indicated as being a contact of the first user are located in a geographic vicinity;
 determining, by the at least one computing device in response to the detecting that the first mobile device and the second mobile are located in the geographic vicinity, that the second user matches at least one criterion defined within the user profile associated with the first user; and
 facilitating, by the at least one computing device in response to the determining, a social networking interaction between the first and second users;
 wherein the facilitating of the social networking interaction comprises automatically storing contact information corresponding to the second user for later access by the first user.

9. The method of claim **8**, further comprising facilitating, by the at least one computing device, a transmission of a social interaction code from the first mobile device associated with said first user to the second mobile device associated with said second user.

10. The method of claim **9**, further comprising detecting, by the at least one computing device, a selection by the first user of a hotkey included within the first mobile device and associated with the social interaction code, wherein the hotkey comprises a button preprogrammed to transmit the social interaction code in response to user selection of the button.

11. The method of claim **9**, wherein the social interaction code comprises at least one of text content, graphics content, video content, and audio content.

12. The method of claim **8**, wherein the at least one criterion comprises at least one dating criterion, and wherein the automatically storing the contact information comprises creating a log of a potential dating match between the user and the another user for access by the user.

13. The method of claim **8**, wherein the user profile defines the first user as a member of an entourage that also includes a third user associated with a third mobile device, and wherein the method further comprises:

detecting, by the at least one computing device, that the first and third mobile devices are located in the geographic vicinity; and
 automatically facilitating, by the at least one computing device in response to the detecting that the first and third mobile devices are located in the geographic vicinity and in accordance with the user profile, collaboration between the first user and the third user.

14. A system comprising:

a storage facility configured to maintain data representative of a user profile associated with a first user of a first mobile device;
 a location detection facility communicatively coupled to the storage facility and configured to detect that the first mobile device and a second mobile device associated

20

with a second user who is not indicated as being a contact of the first user are located in a geographic vicinity; and

a social networking facility communicatively coupled to the location detection facility and configured to determine, in response to the detection that the first mobile device and the second mobile are located in the geographic vicinity, that the second user matches at least one criterion defined within the user profile associated with the first user, and
 facilitate, in response to the determination that the second user matches the at least one criterion, a social networking interaction between the first and second users by automatically storing contact information corresponding to the second user for later access by the first user.

15. The system of claim **14**, wherein said user profile defines the first user as a member of a group that also includes a third user associated with a third mobile device, and wherein:

the location detection facility is further configured to detect that the third mobile device is located in another geographic vicinity and that the first mobile device has entered into the another geographic vicinity; and

the social networking facility transmitting is further configured to transmit, in response to the detection that the first mobile device has entered into the another geographic vicinity, an arrival notification to the third mobile device, the arrival notification configured to notify the third user of an entrance of the first user into the another geographic vicinity.

16. The system of claim **14**, wherein said user profile designates a third user associated with a third mobile device as a secret friend of the first user, and wherein the social networking facility is further configured to disguise an identity of the third user on a display of the first mobile device.

17. The system of claim **14**, wherein the social networking facility is further configured to facilitate a transmission of a social interaction code from the first mobile device associated with said first user to the second mobile device associated with said second user.

18. The system of claim **17**, wherein the social networking facility is further configured to detect a selection by the first user of a hotkey included within the first mobile device and associated with the social interaction code, wherein the hotkey comprises a button preprogrammed to transmit the social interaction code in response to user selection of the button.

19. The system of claim **17**, wherein the social interaction code comprises at least one of text content, graphics content, video content, and audio content.

20. The system of claim **14**, wherein the user profile defines the first user as a member of an entourage that also includes a third user associated with a third mobile device, and wherein:
 the location detection facility is further configured to detect that the first and third mobile devices are located in the geographic vicinity; and
 the social networking facility is further configured to automatically facilitate, in response to the detection that the first and third mobile devices are located in the geographic vicinity and in accordance with the user profile, collaboration between the first user and the third user.

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